

PR6027  
I2274P6

A  
A  
0  
0  
0  
6  
4  
2  
6  
1  
0  
0



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

# POEMS

BY

D. H. S. NICHOLSON

LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
RIVERSIDE



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2008 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation



POEMS BY D. H. S. NICHOLSON



# POEMS

*DANIEL  
HOWARD  
NICHOLSON*  
BY  
D. H. S. NICHOLSON  
*REPT*

METHUEN & CO. LTD.  
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.  
LONDON

PR 6027

I 2274 P6

*First Published in 1913*

# CONTENTS

## I

|   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| THE PRAYER-WALK . . . . .                   | I    |
| THE MARCH OF THE TREES . . . . .            | 4    |
| MIST . . . . .                              | 6    |
| TO THE DANCING FAUN . . . . .               | 8    |
| LUNATIC . . . . .                           | 11   |
| THE SONG OF THE SEA . . . . .               | 13   |
| LES-SAINTES-MARIES-DE-LA-MER . . . . .      | 16   |
| TAPESTRY . . . . .                          | 18   |
| SUNSET AT ASSISI . . . . .                  | 19   |
| SUNSET AT RAPALLO . . . . .                 | 21   |
| L'HEURE DU BERGER (PAUL VERLAINE) . . . . . | 22   |
| CHANSON D'AUTOMNE (PAUL VERLAINE) . . . . . | 23   |
| A CROSS-CONNECTION . . . . .                | 24   |
| A LITANY TO THE GODDESS OF NIGHT . . . . .  | 27   |
| SAN PIETRO MARTIRE . . . . .                | 29   |
| JEANNE D'ARC . . . . .                      | 30   |
| NOCTURNE . . . . .                          | 31   |
| "A LITTLE MORE . . ." . . . . .             | 32   |
| WRECKAGE . . . . .                          | 34   |
| DEO GNOTO . . . . .                         | 35   |
| THE HILL . . . . .                          | 36   |

## II

|   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| A PRAYER . . . . .                        | 39   |
| A LITANY . . . . .                        | 40   |
| TWO VIEWS . . . . .                       | 42   |
| CHRISTMAS . . . . .                       | 44   |
| * * *                                     | 46   |
| FACTS . . . . .                           | 47   |
| A TRIPYCH . . . . .                       | 50   |
| THE MAN AND THE WOMAN . . . . .           | 54   |
| ANY MAN TO ANY GOD . . . . .              | 56   |
| THE SECRET IN THE SKY . . . . .           | 57   |
| THE VIGIL OF ST. JOSEPH, ASSISI . . . . . | 59   |
| BROTHER FELIX . . . . .                   | 61   |
| DEDICATION . . . . .                      | 63   |
| SORROW . . . . .                          | 65   |
| TREASURE . . . . .                        | 66   |
| NON NOBIS . . . . .                       | 68   |
| WORSHIP . . . . .                         | 69   |
| A SEARCH . . . . .                        | 70   |
| IMMANENCE . . . . .                       | 73   |
| IMMACULATA ET BEATA ! . . . . .           | 74   |

I



## THE PRAYER-WALK

O COME with me to the prayer-walk  
Where the tamarisk spray is blown,  
Where ever the sharp sea-grasses talk  
In a whispered undertone  
Of things that the sea has known,  
And the terrible sounds they hear.

That I show you the place of the secret mere  
Hemmed round by the tamarisk hedge,  
Through the veils of the mist that shift and clear  
From the water's mournful edge,  
And the channels choked with sedge,  
And the horrible shapes that fight.

Where shadows pass on a silver night  
As the tamarisk bushes sway,  
And glide on the water gleaming bright  
In a world grown far away ;  
And thick weed odours stay  
In the quivering haunted air.

Perilous forests of pine are there,  
Where small gnomes peer and hide,  
And uncouth patches of earth worn bare  
By shapeless feet that glide,  
And tortured branches tied  
In the dark by fumbling hands.

There are nettles rank in poisonous bands,  
And burdocks gross and thick,  
Distorted growths of forgotten lands  
Before earth's climacteric ;  
And hidden memories prick  
With a sudden sickening pain.

And the soul hears notes of an old refrain  
Sung back in the depths of time,  
Beneath the stretch of a dead inane,  
Midst the hideous things of slime ;  
Strange turns of formless rhyme  
That shudder and break and end. . . .

(For no man knows what the gods may send,  
Or the day when the word will come  
That shall change the ways of his life, or lend  
A voice to a soul born dumb.  
And never man shall plumb  
The depths of a sleeping past.)

So come with me where the shade is cast  
By the tortured tamarisk plumes,  
And strange unbidden thoughts crowd fast  
From their unremembered tombs,  
    And stunted lichen blooms  
Where the hand of time has passed.

ST. LAWRENCE.

## THE MARCH OF THE TREES

AT the last it will surely come, to-day or in  
many years,  
The thing I have known from always, the  
fertile mother of fears.

Mercy is not in nature, nor change of the great  
Design,  
And each man knows his horror, and the March  
of the Trees is mine.

It will not be in the silence when the heavy trees  
are white,

But the slumbrous after-stillness in the deep of a  
summer night,

When the distant frogs are croaking and the mist  
shapes dance on the pond

A slow and fearful measure, like wraiths of the  
pale Beyond.

I think there will be a signal, some hint of a  
whispered word

Stirring the forest silence, or the cry of a  
stricken bird.

And the trees will be bowed together, and raise  
their heads again,

While the sound of the trees rejoicing will be as  
the sound of rain.

They will come up out of the valleys where they  
have waited long,  
And down from the quiet hills in a terrible  
giant throng :  
But I (it is written so in the Book of the Laws of  
Fate)  
Shall stay in the desolate clearing, and watch as  
they come, and wait.

They will not come with a shouting, nor singing  
the forest song,  
But clothed with the deeper silence that broods  
on an ancient wrong.  
And my body will pay, being crushed, though it  
struggle and fight for breath ;  
But the end of the March of the Trees will be  
silence also, and death.

WISLEY.

## MIST

MIST on the hills, all mist,  
And never a hill-top kissed  
With the fire of the hidden sun :  
    Mist in the leafy dells  
    And the open rolling fells,  
And the work of the day is done.

Mist in the dripping wood,  
Where the Pan-God lonely stood  
With the smile of an evil grace :  
    Mist in the dusky lane,  
    All dark with the sudden pain  
Of a crying, anguished face.

Mist on the moaning sea,  
Where the waves toil hopelessly  
And the land is a shadowed death :  
    Mist on the river's breast,  
    And every branch is dressed  
In the gauze of its clinging breath.

Mist in the mind of man,  
However he try to scan  
The track of the coming years:  
Is there mist in the mind of God,  
And never a footstep trod  
But is wet with a rain of tears?

ST. LAWRENCE.

## TO THE DANCING FAUN

THEY sins are not heavy upon thee, O quivering son of the morn,  
The joy of the gods is upon thee, the joy of the dance of the faun.

Art thou human or godlike or brutish ? Wast thou born of the surge of the sea ?  
Was the grass in the dew of the morning, or the sunlight the mother of thee ?

Thou art youth in the sun of his gladness, in the boundless extent of his might,  
Untroubled, unshackled, unheeding, the child of the strength of the light.

Thou knowest the joy of the morning, the joy of the love of the sun  
As he leaps from the couch of his loving, intent on the journey begun

Through the realms of the day of his glory—  
the passing of sea and of land,  
Light bringing and springing and scatt'ring, the gift of the gold of his hand.

The song of the water thou knowest—the sound  
of the surge of the sea,  
The thunderous foam of its breaking—the thrill  
of the force that is free.

The fling of its freshness thou feelest—the sting  
of the salt of the sea,  
In the swing and the sway of its motion, the  
springing and moving of thee.

Thou singest the song of the creatures, the lilt  
of the love of the light,  
Upstretching thyself to the giver, outstretching  
thine arms to the fight

Of the mortal immortal becoming, undying with  
youth and with grace  
And the fullness of life that is in thee, the  
prowess and pride of the pace

Of the dance that thou dancest, unheeding, O  
terrible child of the sun  
When he ravished the sea in her sleeping, O boy  
of the bride that he won.

Who telleth the tale of thy troubles — who  
counteth the cost of thy cares  
That thou carelessly flingest behind thee ? Who  
sifteth the wheat from the tares

In the glorious life that thou livest, O splendid  
and pagan and strong,  
Who takest the treasure thou findest, nor knowest  
of right or of wrong ?

Thy sins are not heavy upon thee—thou leapest  
too high for regrets ;  
Thou art Life, thou art Strength, thou art Beauty,  
for thou knowest the joy that forgets.

## CAPRI.

## LUNATIC

O HEARTLESS moon, O passion-spent, O  
moon the murderer,  
Thy ancient pains show vivid stains, O cold  
adulteress.

Black shadows flit across thy face, like evil birds  
of sin,  
Thou mock'st thy name with veilless shame, O  
virgin Messaline.

Thy youth had many paramours, cold heart and  
burning hand,  
And led in trance and mazy dance and weary  
saraband

White worshippers impassionate with mad virility  
In loveless fields where passion yields a dumb  
sterility.

For thou hast wantoned everywhere, dim bergs  
of moveless ice  
Have known the grace of thy cold embrace—the  
hornèd cockatrice

Has fled the ban of thy shadowing, where  
blackened temples feel  
The painted bliss of thy harlot's kiss, O royal  
Jezebel.

Now thou hast sent the reeling sun to the  
haunted caves of night,  
And sucked his power in the twilight hour, a  
blinded Nazarite.

And thou serenely blazonest thy countless villanies  
As thou ridest high in a bloodless sky, O queen  
of tyrannies.

But now thou mated art with death—wails high  
the blind banshee :  
Thy silver blood in a poison-flood sickens the  
heaving sea.

CAPRI.

# THE SONG OF THE SEA

(otherwise known as)

## THE TRIUMPH OF THE RAVENING BEAST

I ROCK with a peace sublime  
The sun to sleep on my breast :  
I mock mankind with my sister Time  
With the lure of rest.

With a myriad living wreathes  
The fruits of my heaving womb  
Enfringe the rocks where the water seethes  
From the depths of gloom.

With crimson and gleaming gold  
They sway in the purpurate edge,  
White tipped, of my wave, as I bind and hold  
Mankind with my pledge.

In emerald caves I glide,  
Where never the living sun  
Sends rays to lighten my whisp'ring tide  
With the day begun.

In depthless echoing pools  
Where endlessly water drips,  
The ceaseless force of my kingdom rules,  
And my motion slips.

I mutter in hidden holes  
An earnest of rage in store ;  
A leaden grumble of anger rolls  
And swells to a sullen roar.

Then—Oh for the crashing foam,  
The shout of the surging sea ;  
And woe to man as the billows comb  
In the roar of the wrath of me.

I thunder and scream and sing,  
I writhe in a lust of blood,  
I shake the earth till the mountains ring  
With the blows of the shrieking flood.

I hurtle and storm and whirl  
Blood mad with a thirst for life—  
Engulf the stars with the waves I hurl  
And shatter the world with strife.

Till I glut my soul with death,  
    Till I gorge my maw with flesh,  
I clutch the throats as they fight for breath,  
    And I wreath the limbs that thresh,  
  
Till my hunger is satiate.  
    Then—sleep and a cloudy moon.  
And I mock mankind with my sister Fate  
    With the snare of a dreamy swoon.

## CAPRI.

## LES-SAINTES-MARIES-DE-LA-MER

A DESOLATE lot has Saintes-Maries,  
A lonely church by an inland sea,  
A world abandoned utterly,  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

Church and fortress together stand  
Ghostly guard of a smitten land,  
Throne of a country swathed in sand,  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

The Saracens found a fateful shield  
Where now the suppliant sick are healed,  
But ever it stands in a barren field,  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

Shapeless patches of water lie  
Stagnant under a moveless sky,  
Even the water seems to die—  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

Large white birds on the marsh's grey,  
Lonely souls that mourn alway,  
Bitterly cry at the death of day,  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

A desolate lot has Saintes-Maries,  
A lonely church by an inland sea,  
A world abandoned utterly,  
Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

## LES-SAINTES-MARIES.

## TAPESTRY

LONG avenues of gold—broad duller streams  
Of beaten silver hammered by the hand  
Of some old studious craftsman, where the wind  
Troubles the river's flow—a lithe black barge  
Following the patient beasts—a sedgy pool  
Holding the sun's farewell—then pyramids  
And spires and towers of gold set quivering  
In the opal mist—the melancholy scent  
Of fallen leaves strewing the steamy earth.  
Threading the colours of the tapestry  
The long slim burning avenues of gold.

PARIS—LYON.

## SUNSET AT ASSISI

**T**HE sun goes down and the passing bell  
Rings for a soul's release :  
Warm amber and pale emerald :  
Praise God for a soul at peace.

The sun goes down and the burning sky  
Glow like a pyre of death :  
Leap black flames on a sky of gold :  
Praise God that He summoneth.

The sun goes down and the world is dead,  
Clothed in majesty :  
Slowly shudders a mournful bell :  
Praise God for His mystery.

The moon comes up in a silent world,  
Dead with the dying sun :  
Float dark clouds on a pearly sea :  
Praise God for the night begun.

The stars come out in a purple sky,  
Glitter like babies' eyes :  
Lightly chatter the lesser bells :  
Praise God that He doth devise.

The moon mounts up like a shining soul,  
White with a perfect love :  
Perfect peace of the silent bells :  
Praise God for the rest above !

ASSISI.

## SUNSET AT RAPALLO

**F**AR purple hills—a flaming sky—  
Fire raging on the slow sea-flood.

A cold moon high,

A sailor's cry,

Land air and water drenched in blood.

## MONTALEGRO.

## L'HEURE DU BERGER

PAUL VERLAINE

THE moon lies red upon the world's dim  
edge ;  
The shifting mist wreathes meadowlands in  
smoke  
And soothes them into sleep, a frog's hoarse  
croak  
Resounds and dies among the quivering sedge.

The lily-petals close—the waters sleep.  
Far off the poplars show against the sky  
Their rigid stems that cluster spectrally,  
And fire-flies flicker where the woods are deep.

The screech-owls wake, and swoop in noiseless  
flight  
With heavy wings that beat the sable air.  
All heaven is filled with cloudy stars that flare :  
Venus shines silverly, and it is Night.

BOOKHAM.

## CHANSON D'AUTOMNE

PAUL VERLAINE

THE full toned viol of autumn sobs  
Its deep notes in my soul,  
And in my stricken heart there throbs  
A wistful monotone that robs  
Life of its goal.

Lost days I may not live again,  
And loves I fain would keep  
In some shrine far and free from stain  
Pass, and I watch them pale from pain,  
With eyes that weep.

Tossed broken on an evil wind,  
My life is frail for grief.  
And I too pass and may not find  
Sleep or repose for soul or mind,  
Like some dead leaf.

BOOKHAM.

## A CROSS-CONNECTION

"If, for instance, we could splice the outer extremity of our optic nerves to our ears, and that of our auditory nerves to our eyes, we should hear the lightning and see the thunder . . ."      W. JAMES, *Textbook of Psychology*.

**I**NTO the hushed symphony of night  
Whose muted music of close-woven sound  
Spreads like a curtain, threads the call of day.  
Uncertain notes break through the film of sleep,  
In the land of mist where dream and life are met,  
And sound as with the faint shrill note of reeds  
Played where some river bank is globed with dew.  
Small bells of silver shake on smitten wires  
Tight drawn across the sky's infinity,  
With jangle of thin voices, and a thrill  
As though clear water bubbled cool and low  
On some pool's surface, shudders through the world.

Then sudden leaps across the undertone  
The clarion trumpet of the call of day.  
The full toned peals ring out across the sea,  
Far scattering night—the deeper organ sound  
Rolls, of the brazen light's high triumphing.  
I hear the beating music of the sun,  
The throbbing of his full diapason,

Across the far dominion of Space.  
I hear the unimaginable song  
Of beams far flung, victorious—the might  
Of his unceasing chant deafens my ears  
Till, mingling with the pæan of his power  
Steals in a softer music, as of flutes  
Low played in dreamy woods at eventide.  
The deep voiced drowsy murmur of the clouds  
Muffles the organ blare, titanic bells  
Of slow tongued bronze are beat, and very far  
A hum as incense chanted litanies  
Drones on the sense. Slower and softer pulse  
The veins of air where throbs the bells' thick blood  
Till there is almost silence, broken through  
By th' infinite far tinkling of the stars,  
As fairy anvils struck with tiny blows.  
Then flows serenely through the waiting air  
The cold pure stream of music of the moon.  
All else is hushed, and, distantly and dim,  
Begins the dreamy symphony of night.

. . . . .

I see the thunder. There, behind that cloud  
He lurks like some immense ungainly beast,  
Amorphous, black, with rugged spine of horn  
Jagged like a mountain range . . . He changes  
form,

Small rough-hewn towers stand in a wilderness  
Of black wind-driven sand, then cluster close,  
Heap frightfully together, totter, fall,  
Scattering colossal fragments. Blindly crawl  
These forms of hideous formlessness—again  
Piles mass on fearful mass, looms huge, clear cut,  
An obelisk which splits, rending itself  
To many spears of stone that pierce the void  
And, shattering, fall. A monstrous writhing  
snake  
Coils from the chaos, dark, big-bellied, gross,  
And crushes form and formless in his folds.

That lightning deafens—like an engine scream  
It cuts the brain—freezes the shuddering heart  
Like some lithe serpent hiss—it whistles shrill  
As the shrieking meteor burns the seething air.

And then the wind peers round the sheltering  
rock,  
A nebulous cloud form shot with livid flame,  
Stained with harsh streaks of grey, and all its shape  
Swollen and blotched with dull deformities.

I see it grip the thunder—see them shake,  
Wrestling and struggling for the mastery,  
These two gigantic horrors, and I hear  
The long drawn howl and anguish of the flame.

## CAPRI.

## A LITANY TO THE GODDESS OF NIGHT

O VIRGIN pure, star-circleted,  
Thy sable hair light-filleted,  
Hear us, O Goddess  
Grant us Thy peace.

O Thou, whose eyes are cold and clear,  
Thy brow untroubled and austere,  
Hear us, O Virgin  
Grant us Thy peace.

O Goddess, whom the soft mist drapes  
With strange fantastic shadow-shapes,  
Hear us, O Goddess  
Grant us Thy peace.

O Mother of the silent hours,  
O gentle Lover of the flowers,  
Hear us, O Virgin  
Grant us Thy peace.

O spirit cool who dost renew  
All things, O Giver of the dew,  
Hear us, O Goddess  
Grant us Thy peace.

O silver Goddess, who dost give  
The shadow that lets all things live,  
Hear us, O Virgin  
Grant us Thy peace.

O Patroness of Love and Hate,  
Thou silent Watcher over Fate,  
O Virgin Queen immaculate,  
Hear us as we supplicate,  
    Hear us, O Goddess,  
    White Virgin hear us,  
    Grant us Thy Peace.

RAPALLO.

## SAN PIETRO MARTIRE

FRA ANGELICO

KEEP silent. It is better so. God knows  
No words can give the bitterness of it,  
And He alone can quench the fire He lit,  
Not men and blood and agony and blows.

Nor yet can any tell the joy thereof :  
The swift keen ecstasy of wounds that rain  
On this my body which is His—Shall pain  
Or dark blood clotting overcome His love ?

Yet, that a little way I may extend  
The extreme limit of His glory, take  
The book I wrote for joy of suffering's sake.  
Keep silent, then, always, until the end.

BOOKHAM.

## JEANNE D'ARC

“ La piteuse femme lui demanda, requist et supplia humblement, ainsi qu'il estoit près d'elle en sa fin, qu'il allast en l'église prochaine et qu'il lui apportast la croix pour la tenir eslevée tout droit devant ses yeux jusques au pas de la mort, afin que la croix où Dieu pendist fut en sa vie continuellement devant sa vue.”

“ **I**f there be gratitude within the world  
Behind the canopy of smoke and flame,  
To which my soul will fearfully be hurled,  
Weighted with censure and with strong men's  
blame,

I pray that you may taste it. I have fought  
And men have passed beyond all memory  
For love of Him whose symbol you have brought,  
The sign of death—the sign of victory.

I see it, though all else be overcast,  
The key of mercy and the sword of grace !  
Ah ! Jesu, Jesu, at the very last  
I hear the voices and I see Thy face ! ”

BOOKHAM.

## NOCTURNE

**T**HREE is peace on the land,  
The small stars stand  
Dim points on the field of night :  
The dark strange groves  
Where the brown owl roves  
Loom loft by the sheer cliff's white.

A gleaming way  
From the silent bay  
Lies wide on a waveless deep :  
A silver spell  
Ineffable  
Brings all creation sleep.

ST. LAWRENCE.

“A LITTLE MORE . . .”

DEAR Heart, I think the sea must love  
the land

With murmur of close kisses, even as we  
Who blindly see its passion as we stand  
Beyond its force, swayed by it utterly,  
While all the thunders of its tumult find  
The way to our deep souls—make throb the blood  
Within us like the dark reverberate wind,  
And scatter reason like the racing scud.

Who ploughs the foaming furrows of the sea ?  
Who drives the snowy serpents of the waves,  
That hiss with gaping jaws remorselessly  
Against the moveless rocks ? Who, who enslaves  
All mind, all body and all soul of us,  
Drenches with loving, wreathes about with this  
Tight rope of unity, this tenuous  
Unbreaking bond—what force compels our kiss ?

Is it the same unknowledgeable power,  
Part of the same unerring ceaseless scheme ?  
Is Man too, at the striking of his hour,  
Swayed by the elemental gods who seem

To hurl the sea white-foaming at the shore,  
Dripping, insatiable, merciless,  
Panting with lust of conquest? Is he more  
Than this stern sea invincible, or less?

None reins the fury of the waves that roll  
Livid with passion. Man has fought to gain  
This conquest of his forces, to control  
His soul's fierce elements, through ageless pain.  
The wind moans fruitless on a weeping shore,  
The sea storms vainly on a broken strand—  
Dear Heart, by just this much I love you more  
Than even the passionate sea can love the land.

ST. LAWRENCE.

## WRECKAGE

THE world was black, strange figures moved  
Across my sight to-day ;  
Small arguments that blindly proved  
Their truth made interplay,  
Like dull worms crawling in my brain,  
That crept and turned and crept again.

All sight was gone, all power to think  
My own thoughts had been lost.  
I was not—I had seemed to sink  
Beneath a flood that tossed  
My wreckage on a burning sea,  
My scattered personality.

. . . . .  
Then light returned—dull thoughts began  
To thunder through my brain,  
Like echoings that reeled and ran  
Down pillared halls of pain,  
Where Past with Present seemed to brood  
And Present with the Future stood.

MILAN.

## DEO GNOTO

O PASSIONATE god, have mercy on thy slave !

A thousand deaths a thousand times I died  
With thy grasp clutching at my throat—the tide

Of life thou gavest sank, and wave on wave  
Of fiercer fire rose, scorching—Thou didst lave  
My inmost self with flame ; I seemed to ride  
Red billows of most monstrous fire, flung wide  
Across a terrible sea, toward a grave.

Unloose thy grip, and let my life find rest  
In some cool garden where the setting sun  
Brings shaded memories, and none molest  
The peace I laboured many lives to win—  
And yet . . . is rest gained when the fight is  
done ?  
Or wishing it the unforgiven sin ?

BOOKHAM.

## THE HILL

I CLIMBED the hill of all the world's desire.  
I saw the heights and all the deeps thereof,  
The summit of it stained and rent with fire,  
And all the slopes as meadowlands of love.

Cool meadowlands where little lovers played,  
With wet deep grass and coronals of flowers ;  
Broad paths and soft and avenued with shade  
Where lives were dreams and centuries were  
hours.

But all the top was ringed about with flame  
That whoso battled through was scorched.  
The ways  
Were straitened, and the hours of them became  
As centuries. But those therein gave praise.

BOOKHAM.

II



## A PRAYER

COME back, come back, O Lover of my soul,  
And thrill my life with music once again,  
Even if pain  
Need be, that your old ecstasy shall roll  
    And break the flood-gates of my impotence.  
    Let every sense  
    Ring to the riot of your hurricane.

Come back, O Lover of the murdered Christ  
    That lies within me, pallid and forlorn,  
    Let me be torn  
By all the pangs of grief or joy unpriced,  
    If I may shake the fetters from my mind,  
    If I may find  
The night of silence breaking into morn.

O memory of unforgotten ways,  
    Red roses of my passionate desire,  
    Clothe in your fire  
The weight of these intolerable days,  
    Scorch up the dross of heaviness and death  
    And, with your breath,  
Inspire this bodied dumbness, lest I tire.

ST. LAWRENCE.

## A LITANY

LORD, in the hour of our distress  
And moments of our weariness,  
Look down.

When days are drear and nights are cold  
With biting winds that tear and scold,  
Look down.

When all our world is desolate  
And all our love is turned to hate,  
Look down.

When Fate has sought us out at last  
And punishes for what is past,  
Look down.

When new temptations daily rise  
And we succumb with shameful eyes,  
Look down.

When we are filled with numbing dread  
Of cherished fancies cold and dead,  
Look down.

Grant us the strength that will not fail,  
Grant us the Light that will not pale,  
O Lord of Death and Lord of Life,  
To us whose lives are pale with strife  
Send hope.

LONDON.

## TWO VIEWS

### I

CHRIST is risen ! Christ is risen ! Hear  
the shrieking choir boys claim  
While the Easter sun is burning like a molten  
targe of flame.

Hail the Saviour—Hallelujah ! What is that to  
me or you  
While the meadow-green is shining through a  
mesh of silver dew ?

Sins forgiven—Love triumphant ! What is that  
to you or me  
While the peewit's sharp lamenting echoes from a  
silver sea ?

Satan vanquished — Hell is conquered ! Is it  
nothing that the sheep  
Fill the air with heavy bleating, waking from  
their winter sleep ?

Hail the Resurrection morning ! While the  
gorse's burning mouth  
Loads the air with all the fragrance of a long  
forgotten south.

What is that to you and me then, Christ is judged  
and Christ condemned ?

Pilate only leaps to value when the passion-flood  
is stemmed.

What to us the Passion story, Christ is dying,  
Christ is dead,  
If we are not daily dying in His everlasting  
stead ?

What effects the Crucifixion, if we be not  
crucified  
Man for Godhead, hourly dying, that He may be  
glorified ?

Where the Resurrection value if we do not learn  
to rise  
Daily, hourly, to the freedom that is our supernal  
prize ?

ABBOTSHAM.

## CHRISTMAS

**F**AR away from the hollied churches,  
Here where the wind is keen and wild  
Under the delicate silver birches  
Feast we the Birth of the Holy Child.

We are the Father and we the Mother,  
We the Mages who offer gold ;  
(How shall we ask or desire another  
Sign than the symbol the churches hold ?)

The gifts of them from the East are given  
Now, by us, when we offer praise  
Of consecration, when we have striven  
With depth and darkness of winter days.

Thou art born of our great desiring,  
Child of Light, in our inmost part :  
Child of Love and a faith untiring  
Thou dost live in the heart of heart.

Born of death and a great surrender  
We thy Father and Mother are :  
We in the depth of the year engender  
Light to enlighten the days afar.

Here in the joy of a new creation,  
Saved by Thee from a world of wrong,  
Feast we the Feast of the Incarnation  
Here where the light of the sun is strong.

ST. LAWRENCE.

\*       \*       \*

CALM eyes that know not fear  
Look into space,  
Unflinching eyes and clear  
That light the face.

A broad brow slightly drawn  
By lines of pain,  
A sudden flash of scorn  
That dies again.

A touch of weariness  
About the lips,  
A shade of dreariness  
The eyes eclipse.

A straight firm mouth whose breath  
Is inward curled—  
I see the face of Death  
Watching the world.

LAUFFENMÜHLE.

## FACTS

THE wood is quiet to-day—  
No wind has stirred  
The magic silence of the trees,  
Nor any bird  
That sings his life away.

Stillness is made complete  
By her own peace,  
And lays her mantle on the world.  
I, sole, release  
The sound no things repeat.

Before, beside, behind,  
The trees are ranged  
In infinite dim labyrinths :  
The ways are changed  
Each step I take to find

The secret vantage-place.  
There is, I know,  
Some one point which is everywhere,  
Which found would show  
The way my steps efface.

These shades where no grass grows  
Nor any green,  
Dim shadowy groves where all is faint  
And there is seen  
No light, and no wind blows ;

And these dells gold with light,  
Where every leaf  
And bud is palpitant with life,  
Where is no grief  
Or shadow of the night :

All these, if I could find  
That point, would range  
Themselves in one glad avenue :  
The Path would change  
And clear. But I am blind. . . .

Far down that shining glade  
A temple stands,  
Where flames the Truth's Apocalypse.  
He who demands  
And who is not afraid

Shall see. And so I stray,  
And seek to learn  
Which tree may guide me to the spot  
Where I may turn  
And see the open way.

BELFORT.

## A TRIPTYCH

### I

O H the joy of the fields and the sky!  
Of clouds blown high  
In the van of a clean strong wind !  
Of open spaces  
And splendid places  
Where ever the great storms find  
New force for the war  
On the slaves of law . . .  
Oh the joy of the driving rain  
When it shrieks and stings,  
And the black sky flings  
White floods on the cringing plain !  
There is joy on the heights  
When Rebellion lights  
His flame-dusk torch of war ;  
There is clamour and song  
And an end of wrong,  
An end to the bond of Law.

Come up, come up to the hills and see  
How the waves laugh loud in the sun,  
And the great tides turn and the great seas  
run . . .

Come up to the hills and see,  
Where the winds are strong and the winds are  
    free  
And the clouds are racing by . . .  
Ah . . . the fields and the sky !

2

Peace to your words, an iron law  
    Binds, by the grace of God,  
Both you and all the hills you saw  
    And all the grass you trod.

No man avoids, no bird escapes,  
    Fly he to Heaven's gate,  
The immemorial law that shapes  
    The ends foreseen of Fate.

No schoolboy rebel on the hills  
    Is free (praise be to Christ !),  
But all he thinks and all he wills  
    To law is sacrificed.

The seas are bound with cosmic chains,  
    The stars are still with awe,  
No vagrant meteor despairs  
    The bondage of the law.

Life lays a track no man forsakes  
    However great the cost,  
Freedom a dream whereof God makes  
    A monstrous holocaust.

The law that shapes the gnat's small flight  
    Unswervingly controls  
All men and things. Hail to the might  
    That over-rules our souls !

3

All things are bound and all things, too, are free.  
    Their freedom's boundary is set around  
Where none suspects its wide authority . . .  
All things are free and all things, too, are  
    bound.

All prayers of man and all his murmurings,  
    All words and thoughts and actions freely move  
Within the circle of the doom of things,  
    The final limitation set by Love.

No thing is wholly free, nor any thing  
    Tied by the letter of the word of law :  
Unknown the carol that the lark shall sing,  
    Yet known the issue of the cosmic war.

Bound liberty and free necessity,  
Man's freedom limited by God's decree,  
The finite perfect by infinity . . .  
All things are bound and all things, too, are  
free.

BOOKHAM.

## THE MAN AND THE WOMAN

### THE MAN

I SEARCHED for God in field and town,  
And nearly tracked His footsteps down  
One time when all the east was bright  
With moonbeams silvering the night—  
But ever He escaped from me  
As I pursued Him wearily.

And once within a dripping wood  
With cool rain splashing where I stood,  
And out beyond the fearful sea  
Was mad with rage and misery . . .  
But ever He escaped from me  
As I pursued Him ceaselessly.

And in a place where Mass was sung  
And altar lights with incense hung,  
Where chanting voices rose and sought  
To reach the Infinite, I thought . . .  
But ever He escaped from me  
As I pursued Him fearfully.

In endless words of endless books  
I sought, where fancy turns and looks,  
Or reason offers signs to lead  
To Him who is my only need.

But ever He escaped from me  
As I pursued Him anxiously.

#### THE WOMAN

I scarcely knew I looked for God,  
Or even that a Path was trod  
By His dear soul or by mine own.  
I thought my lover touched the throne . . .

But He has come and taken me  
His own, for ever, utterly.

I made no search of books or men  
Or solemn place in moor or glen,  
But what I did, I did for love  
Of Him who was so far above.

And He has come and taken me  
His own, for ever, utterly.

ST. LAWRENCE.

## ANY MAN TO ANY GOD

OPEN the rushing channels of Thy Word  
And fill my veins with Thy great potency,  
That all life shudder with expectancy  
Of awful messages that Thou hast stirred—  
Let them be heard, O God, let them be heard !

Not mine the message, but all mine the pain,  
The labour and the travailing of birth,  
The bitterness of too reluctant earth  
To greet the children of my servient brain—  
Let them attain, O God, let them attain !

But if it be that all my strength is weak,  
Or if Thou hast no gospel for my lips  
And wilt not grant some great Apocalypse  
By my small voice, to any souls that seek,  
Let others speak, O God, let others speak,

And let me hear the thunder of Thy voice !  
Be riven with the lightning of Thy face !  
Let me be fired by Thy exceeding grace  
And blinded by the wisdom of Thy choice,  
That I rejoice, O God, that I rejoice !

ST. LAWRENCE.

## THE SECRET IN THE SKY

I SOMETIMES think this pageant of the skies  
Must be a canvas where the hand of God  
Writes large the Secret hidden from the wise,  
And blazons it in daily period.

This wealth of gold, that far horizon lit  
By magic flamings—that unheard-of light  
That floods the mountains—can the sense of it  
Be nothing more than heralding the night?

Its changes have a strange similitude;  
The words are many, but the message one:  
The paths to Heaven are a multitude  
Till they show sameness when the Work is done.

The pious beggar muttering mystic runes,  
The thin-lipped priest when he is celebrant  
Of the smoke-hung Mass—the ascetic as he  
swoons  
Entranced in Deity—the postulant

Of all great mysteries—yes, even those  
With raucous voices bawling out their hymns  
In tinny chapels—would they each disclose  
Some other wonder than the sunset limns?

Man's modes are many, but his common aim  
Is Godhead and the mystery of Light :  
Stands daily all the Secret writ in flame  
Till one of him shall learn to spell it right ?

ASSISI.

## THE VIGIL OF ST. JOSEPH, ASSISI<sup>1</sup>

I WAIT their coming, while the misty plain  
Is decked with silver veiling, as a bride.  
Faint birds of evening venture their refrain  
Perched low in rustling olive trees that hide  
Their hesitant throat, and over them is flung  
This gauze of argent with soft fleeces hung.

The slow white oxen move with heavy tread,  
Turning the green to brown, the falling light  
Pours silver in the barren river bed  
Which tortuously winds in ashen white.  
I wait their coming, and the while I wait  
The question wakes again, importunate.

How long this waiting—will there never burst  
The splendid vision on mine aching eyes ?  
Shall I for ever have this desert thirst  
For founts of wisdom that shall never rise ?  
Shall I plod daily on the sandy road  
And earn no little easing of the load ?

<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the feast of St. Joseph the peasants in the plain of Spoleto light bonfires near each of the farms.

Shall my soul never feel the healing flame  
Burning the dross away, and laving me  
With tongues of life—shall my lips never frame  
The hymn my spirit chants eternally ?  
—The wind moans hopelessly across the plain,  
A far light flickers up, and dies again.

Oh Far Immensity that men call God,  
Whether indeed Thou art a part of me  
Or in some other wise, put period  
To this my longing—let the guerdon be  
Some surer knowledge, some more certain sign  
That Thou indeed art here, and I am Thine.

A light—and then another. Ah, again  
Gleaming far out upon the purple hill—  
Another and another—all the plain  
Studded with specks of fire, and further still  
Like beacons in the blackness of the night  
Spring points of hope like orange stars of light.

Here close beneath—ah mercy, how it burns—  
Long yellow tongues and blinding clouds of smoke :  
Each cleansing flame sharp crackling as it turns  
About the wood, and over all the cloak  
Of leaden night. . . . Is God within the flare ?  
Does Godhead answer in the bell-rent air ?

## BROTHER FELIX

BROTHER FELIX, BEING OFFERED PREFERMENT,  
ANSWERS :

“ **N**O, no—for me the cloisters, you may take  
The outside glitter of the toys that break,  
Give me the green deep-shaded plot of ground  
With silent arches simply built around,  
The solemn cypresses that point to God,  
The white narcissus blooms that break the  
sod.

Leave me to draw the water from the well  
Among the tree trunks—let me hear the bell  
That peals to honour of Our Lady, rings  
To hourly worship, while the small bird sings  
His intimate sweet carol to the Lord  
Who gave him life. Ah, not for me the  
sword  
Which rules outside the shelter of my walls ;  
I gladlier hear the water as it falls  
From these black cypress plumes. I rather  
wait  
The sun’s slow entry through the wicket-gate  
Than purple pomp of kings. I hold more  
dear  
The distant murmur of the river here

'Mid these soft Umbrian hills, each olive clad,  
Tree-fringed against the sky, than all the sad  
World music of beyond.

Leave me my peace :  
Your splendours pall with knowledge, mine  
increase."

IN THE CLOISTERS OF THE BASILICA  
OF SAINT FRANCIS, ASSISI.

## DEDICATION

WHAT joy have I in pageants or what part ?  
Even though Art  
May flaunt her gaudiest banners through the  
sky,  
And laughing Fantasy  
Crown Life and Death with diadems of gold,  
I am not overbold  
To make rash soilure of her garment's hem.  
For that is left to them  
Whose eyes are dazzled by her blazonries  
And by her masonries  
Whose tongue is tied. For in my heart I said,  
“ All things are dead  
Whose life is not in Thee, from Thee, to Thee.”  
And must I flee  
Down echoing vaultings of the running years  
Shaken with perilous fears,  
Lest I may turn again and halt and say,  
“ Thine was the way,  
Oh Mistress I have loved and yet have left ? ”  
But I am not bereft  
Of hope and flowers and loving and the sun.  
The day is not begun  
With sunset splendours in the seer's eyes,  
Nor do there rise

Heaven's pinnacles before the neophyte,  
Though he have might  
Of dim foreknowledge of his journey's end,  
And God extend  
Strong arms to help his weakness and his strength.

Along the fearful length  
Of roads dust-trodden by men's hastening  
I go toward the King.  
—What part have I in pomp and pageanting ?

BOOKHAM.

## SORROW

“SORROW is sent for strengthening,” they said,  
And I, “Shall I live when my dreams are dead ?  
Can any strength come out of bitterness ?  
There is no harvesting where hope is fled.”

For I was ignorant of Sorrow’s ways  
And spoke much blasphemy in her dispraise ;  
“ When lilies shall be born of carrion  
And all the nights be brighter than the days,  
When all the waves of all the seas are still  
Then good may come from evil ; but until—”  
But Sorrow touched my forehead, saying “Come,  
You cannot know before you do my will.”

For many days I followed where she led,  
And saw that hope and sorrowing are wed,  
That strength is truly child of suffering,  
And suffering by strength is comforted.

She taught me that by her men may attain,  
And even I was joined to Sorrow’s train :  
“ Sorrow is sent for strengthening,” I said,  
“ The way of progress is the way of pain.”

BOOKHAM.

E

65

## TREASURE

ALL you that beat with unavailing hands  
On the blind gate of Heaven,  
All you that hurl reiterant demands,  
Know you the treasure given  
Into your hands ?

Poor hands that grope and dear eyes bright with  
pain,  
Lips twisted in despair,  
You importune the pitiful gods in vain,  
For they have given their  
Treasure of pain.

There is much weeping in the courts of Heaven,  
Much revelling in Hell :  
Not all the angelic chantings of the seven  
Choirs can avail to quell  
Weeping in Heaven

When you disdain the sacrament of grief.  
No thousand empty days  
Voided of sorrow and of joy's relief  
Can offer God the praise  
Of one day's grief.

Offer, dear hands, your splendid sacrifice,  
    Make offering of pain ;  
Shall any words of any men suffice  
    To soil, or God disdain,  
Your sacrifice ?

BOOKHAM.

## NON NOBIS

NOT when the flowers of hope are dead  
And all our earth is black and bound with frost,  
Not when the harvest time is sped  
And autumn leaves on mournful winds are tossed :  
But when the summer flowers are strong,  
And great white lilies falter in the sun  
For very passion, while the song  
Of all things living sounds in unison,  
Shall we turn back and cry :  
“ To Thee who gavest all, we make  
Offering for Thy Glory’s sake,  
God of Eternity ! ”

Not when the human things are shown  
To be the brittle fancies of a dream,  
Nor when man’s littleness is known  
Behind his pageant of the things that seem :  
But when the tide of life runs high,  
And every hour is full of splendid things  
That run glad riot, and the sky  
Is small to hold the rushing of their wings,  
Shall we turn back and cry :  
“ Non nobis, Domine—to Thee  
The glory and the passion be,  
God of Eternity ! ”

## WORSHIP

I BUILD the palace of my Lord the King  
Wherein Life makes her crimson offering,  
With rite of consecration and long praise.  
With weight of prayer and length of many  
days  
She makes her sacrament of suffering.

The music of meet words and magical,  
That rise as incense and as incense fall  
Fills all the palace of my Lord the King.  
The House is dim with voices murmuring  
The sacred burden of their ritual.

. . . . .

If, after many suns have come and gone,  
The light of some apocalyptic Dawn  
Shall flame with splendour in a crimson sky,  
Grant, Dweller in the Shrine, that even I  
May hear the Voice, and see Thy veil withdrawn !

BOOKHAM.

## A SEARCH

AFTER æons of watching and waiting, shall  
it ever or ever be  
That a Hand shall come out of the Cloud, and  
offer the Cup to me?  
And if after the cycles of praying we have gained  
no hint of the Plan,  
Does it matter to you or to me, if the Cup be  
given to Man?

In far away fantastic lands,  
Where fact and fancy interchange  
Their ministries, and nothing stands  
Unmoved amid eternal change,  
A man sought for the Graal Cup,  
Thinking it should be lifted up  
Beyond the people's view.

In sombre forests where the light  
Was pale and dim, and lank things grew  
Faintly beneath eternal night,  
Where dreams were many and prayers few,

A man sought for the Graal Cup,  
Thinking it should be lifted up  
    Away from sun and storm.

In cloistered silences of prayer  
    And orison of ancient form,  
In meadows where the golden air  
Was soft, and with the sun was warm,  
A man sought for the Graal Cup,  
Thinking it should be lifted up  
    In peace and in the sun.

In torrid deserts of the mind  
    Where good and evil were as one,  
And earth and heaven wholly blind  
To all the things of men begun,  
A man sought for the Graal Cup,  
Thinking it should be lifted up  
    In the unstirring void.

Within the pillared halls of gain  
    With small futilities employed,  
In patient ministry to pain  
Whose knowledge no man can avoid,  
A man sought for the Graal Cup,  
Thinking it should be lifted up  
    In man's activity.

Then, as the Quest was fain to cease  
Through famine in the House of Art,  
When there was neither joy nor peace  
And God was as a thing apart,  
The man who sought the Graal Cup  
Found it was daily lifted up  
In his own heart.

BOOKHAM.

## IMMANENCE

WHERE the seas thunder and the white  
waves' rage

Shatters the lives of men, as with a rod  
Man threshing corn fulfils his heritage,  
There, in the toil and tumult, find you God.

Where the lone heath is heavy with distress

Of too great heat, or the moon, silver-shod,  
Peoples with shadows all its wilderness,  
There, in the peace and stillness, find you God.

In the still splendour of the diamond stars,

Or where the depths of snowy lands untrod  
Chant their white hymns, or sudden nenuphars  
Fleck the dull sheen of waters, find you God.

Where in lost groves or 'neath their pall of sand

Desolate temples wail their Ichabod ;  
Where immemorial tropic-trees are fanned  
By murmurous poison winds, there find you  
God.

But where men live, and where men love or hate,

Where good is sought, or men's souls are enticed  
To depths of infamy inordinate,  
Wherever man shall be, there find you Christ.

## IMMACULATA ET BEATA !

IMMACULATA ET BEATA ! Lover of the  
Splendid Soul,  
Somewhere in the deeps of glory where the tears  
of passion roll  
As a sacrament of living, we shall meet and we  
shall be  
One for longer than for ever, in a formless ecstasy.

Princes of a new creation, Cæsars of a splendid  
world,  
Born of pain and great rejoicing, through the  
night of sorrow hurled  
We shall touch the things immortal, more than  
pleasure or than pain,  
Claim the good and leave the other, winnowing  
the splendid grain.

We shall touch the heights of longing, as the fury  
of the sea  
Flings the billows surging upward in tempestuous  
mastery.  
All the pæans of the peoples ringing down the  
halls of Time  
Sound us in our exaltation prothalamions sublime.

Past the furthest thought of living, in the very  
grip of life,  
Past the knowledge of forgetting, past the memory  
of strife,  
Further than the realms of longing, past the  
boundary of dole,  
IMMACULATA ET BEATA ! Lover of the Splendid  
Soul !

BOOKHAM.

*Printed by*  
MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED  
*Edinburgh*



DATE DUE

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 642 610 0

UNIVERSITY OF CA. RIVERSIDE LIBRARY



3 1210 01256 0288

